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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 27 February 2001 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I would be most grateful if you could have the text of this letter* distributed as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

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* Reproduced as received, in Arabic and English only.

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Annex

The continuation of the Israeli criminal war

against the Palestinian people

In their perseverance on its grave violations of the rules of international law and international humanitarian law, the Israeli occupation authorities are still causing daily, and since 28 September 2000, further death and injury to Palestinians, thus bringing the total of martyrs to over 400 in addition to over 20 000 injured. These crimes are taking place among other crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces aimed at killing all aspects of the life of Palestinians under occupation by imposing:

1- Collective punishments on the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory that the Israeli occupation forces implement through measures of total separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

2- Closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

3- Tight military blockade on towns, villages and Palestinian residential centers, obstructing the roads leading to these localities by establishing roadblocks, ground barricades and cement blocks at the points of access to and exit from these towns and localities.

4- Curfew on many Palestinian towns as is the case in the ancient city of Hebron, still under a curfew for over 104 days now and the city of Hawara in the municipality of Nablus, under a curfew for over 25 days now.

5- Prevention of pumping water to many Palestinian cities.

6- Deliberate destruction by the occupation forces to Palestinian agricultural property through campaigns of bulldozing Palestinian farms, thus causing destruction of thousands dunums of lands cultivated with olive trees, citrus trees and other fruit trees which constitute the source of subsistence for thousands Palestinian families.

7- Closure of borders and the Gaza International Airport to forbid Palestinian exit from and access to the Palestinian occupied territories.

8- Preventing access of foodstuffs, medical aid and fuel to the Palestinian areas and exit of Palestinian products designed for export.

9- The Israeli occupation forces are using rockets, tank artillery and heavy machine guns to fire at Palestinian residential buildings and many public utilities, including health and education utilities, causing destruction to hundreds of houses and other properties belonging to the Palestinian population.

10- Preventing Palestinian workers from having access to their place of work to earn their living wage in the Palestinian towns and residential centers.

11- The Israeli occupation authorities and gangs of settlers are preventing, under the threat of weapons, the population of many Palestinian villages from harvesting their crops.

In addition to all the already mentioned forms of collective punishments, the Israeli occupation forces have resorted to implementing the death penalty by acts of assassinations and extrajudical executions of specific civil personalities, such as for example the assassination of the Palestinian Hussein Mohamed Salem Oubeiatt in Beit Sahour on 9/11/2000, assassination of the Palestinian Jamal Abderrazzaq, Awni Zahir and Nael Al-Ledawi on 22/11/2000 near Mirage Settlement in the Gaza Strip, assassination of the Palestinian Ibrahim Abdelkarim Ibrahim bani Ouda on 23/11/2000 in Nablus, assassination of the Palestinian Anouar Mahmoud Ahmed Hamran on 11/12/2000 in Nablus, assassination of Youssef Ahmed Mahmoud Abu Sway on 12/12/2000 in Irtass village of Bethlehem municipality, assassination of the Palestinian Abbas Othman Ahmed Al-Awiwi on 13/12/2000 in Hebron, assassination of the Palestinian Hani Hussein Hassan Bakreh on 14/12/2000 south of the Gaza Strip near

Ketsufiem settlement established on lands belonging to Rafah town, assassination of the Palestinian Saeed Taha Mohamed Saleh Kharoof on 15/12/2000 in Nablus town of the West-Bank, assassination of the Palestinian Sameh Abd Hassan el Malaabi on 17/12/2000 in Qalandia Camp to the north of Jerusalem, assassination of the Palestinian Dr Thabet Ahmed Thabet on 31/12/2000 in Tulkarm to the north of the West-Bank, assassination of the Palestinian Khaled Ghunaim on 08/01/2001 near Halhoul village, assassination of the Palestinian Abdulhamid Khurti on 08/01/2001 near el-Maghraqa roadblock in the Gaza Strip, assassination of the Palestinian Shaker Hassuni on 12/01/2001 in Hebron city of the West-Bank, the assassination of the Palestinian Massoud Hussein Ayyad on 13/02/2001 when the Israeli helicopter gunships fired 4 rockets at his car north of the Gaza Strip.

These acts, which contradict totally the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil, Political and Cultural Rights, the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of war of 1949 and the First Additional Protocol thereto, constitute, according to the provisions of international public law and international humanitarian law, flagrant violations of human rights and war crimes.

The Israeli occupation forces have not sufficed themselves with acts of killing and assassinations against the Palestinian people. In addition to using internationally banned dumdum bullets which explode inside the human body, they resorted to firing an unknown type of internationally banned gas at civilians in khan Yunis, causing over 40 Poisoned cases, who have been overcome by odd symptoms of neurological fits and convulsions, severe feebleness, neurological inflammation accompanied with severe stomachache, bronchitis, loss of consciousness and non-response by the poisoned persons to the medication usually used to cure such cases.

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